

Andraya Tellier  
27 Swift Street  
Providence, RI, 02904  
andrayabeaudoin@gmail.com  
401-477-9180

Chairman Marvin Abney  
House Committee on Finance  
Rhode Island State House  
Room 35  
82 Smith St.  
Providence, RI 02903

March 22, 2021

ATTN: Christopher O'Brien, Committee Clerk

***AGAINST House Bill 5193 - Establishment of Charter Schools***

Dear Chairman Abney and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

My name is Andraya Tellier and I live in Providence. I am writing to express my **strong opposition to Representative O'Brien's bill, H-5193**, regarding charter schools. There are hardly any education options, either pay very high tuitions for private school or attend public school. Owning property in Providence leaves only the Providence Public school as an option since private school tuition is rarely affordable for working class families. When it became time to enroll in kindergarten for our oldest the public school was the only choice we thought we had. To our surprise Achievement First was just opening their first elementary school and was accepting names for their lottery. We had heard of charter schools before and had heard mixed reviews, a family member just started sending their daughters to Blackstone Valley Prep and was extremely impressed with the quality of the education their daughters were being provided. We submitted our oldest Benjamin to the lottery for kindergarten and found out shortly after he was on the waitlist. We enrolled Benjamin in Providence Public School for Kindergarten and was surprised that we had the option of choosing a couple of elementary schools as well as marking off another submission for the charter school lottery right at kindergarten registration. Benjamin attended his Kindergarten year at Martin Luther King Jr Elementary, he was an average student, we met with his teacher once during the school year. When he finished kindergarten, he barely knew sight words, could write his letters and knew his numbers, I was not sure he learned anything new during this school year since he had learned these things at his Pre-K the year prior. Towards the end of the school year, I received an email that the Charter School lottery was opening again and that Achievement First would be opening a second elementary school AF Iluminar. I submitted Benjamin's name again and again he was wait listed. To our surprise we received a phone call shortly after receiving his wait list letter that there was a spot available for Benjamin in first grade if we wanted to send him. We were ecstatic, we attended meetings and introductions, received all the information, and accepted his seat. Benjamin has thrived as a scholar at Achievement First Iluminar, he went from below expectations in reading to exceeding expectations in less than one year. Benjamin is now in 6<sup>th</sup> grade at AF Iluminar Middle School

and is leading his own learning, setting his own personal and educational goals and thriving. Our family had to go through the unknown for two more children, submitting to the lottery for Kindergarten and waiting to see if they were offered a seat. Thankfully both of our younger children were offered seats and accepted, we have two scholars in elementary school, one in second grade and one in kindergarten. Our hope is that all three of our children will be able to complete all 12 years of their education in Achievement First. Families should not be limited to only two education options either pay high tuitions for private school or public school. Charter Schools give families a third option for families to choose what is best for their children. Charter schools should be able to grow and expand to help meet the demand our community has for another school option.

Please oppose House Bill 5193 and let our children pursue the high-quality education they deserve.

Respectfully,  
Andraya Tellier

---